

referred to Nick Bacon, director, Arkansas Department of Veterans Affairs; and Dennis Rainey, executive director, FamilyLife.

Statement on the Anniversary of Ukraine's Closing of the Chernobyl Nuclear Plant

April 26, 2001

Last year on December 15, Ukraine ended one of the darkest chapters of the Soviet legacy and opened a new stage in Ukraine's evolution into a modern European state when it permanently closed the Chernobyl nuclear plant.

Closing Chernobyl created the circumstances for a safer and more prosperous Ukraine for future generations. We are reminded of this today on the 15th anniversary of the terrible accident at Chernobyl and are again grateful that an environmental threat has been removed from the central European landscape.

Today's anniversary is an occasion for the global community to pause and reflect on the lessons provided by this disaster, to recall the valor and dignity that the people of Ukraine displayed in the face of adversity, and to acknowledge the suffering that many victims of Chernobyl continue to endure throughout the region.

I am proud of the American people's role in helping to alleviate this suffering—at the time of the tragedy and continuing through today. I am proud of our continued efforts to work with Ukraine to improve nuclear safety and mitigate the harsh social impact of Chernobyl's closure on the local population.

Much work remains to be done in Ukraine's transition to a modern European state. This work will require strong and courageous leadership over the coming months and years. It will require real support for democracy and difficult but necessary reforms. Last year strong Ukrainian leadership and committed international assistance achieved great results in Chernobyl. I urge Ukraine to stay on the path of reform it set out upon last year. Former U.S. President Theodore Roosevelt once noted that "it is only through strife, through hard and dangerous endeavor,

that we shall ultimately win the goal of true national greatness."

I firmly believe that Ukraine's national greatness rests in Europe and in its transatlantic and global ties. The United States stands ready to work with Ukraine as it undertakes the political and economic reforms necessary to build these ties that are so vital to the brighter future Ukrainians seek for themselves and their children.

Statement on House of Representatives Action on the "Unborn Victims of Violence Act"

April 26, 2001

America's children represent our greatest hope for the future. I commend the House for its bipartisan passing of the "Unborn Victims of Violence Act," which will make it a separate felony to harm an unborn child in the course of committing any one of 68 Federal offenses. This legislation affirms our commitment to a culture of life, which welcomes and protects children.

Remarks at a Celebration of Reading in Houston, Texas

April 26, 2001

The President. Thank you all very much. Thank you very much. Laura and I are really glad to be back in Texas. [Laughter] I didn't realize, Dad, until I saw that video, how different your life has been since I'm the President and you're not. [Laughter] Sounds like it's been pretty rough. And perhaps you and I should sit down and have a discussion, talk about it. Let me think: I have an opening the 27th of September. [Laughter]

We have some other family issues to discuss, like where to put my Presidential Library. [Laughter] I've decided not to go through the hassle of raising money. And so, you know my dad's library? We're just going to add, "And Son." [Laughter] As you can already tell, lately my dad has been calling me "43." I call him "41." It's kind of shorthand we have in our family. And we have a nickname for Mother as well. To show you where she stands in the power structure of